

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 RSC-01 CIAE-00

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4896

SECDEF WASHDC

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OSAF

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OVIP (STEMERDINK, ABRAHAM)

SUBJECT: STATE SECRETARY STEMERDINK COMMENTS ON HIS
VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES

1. SUMMARY: IN LUNCHEON MEETING WITH DCM DEC 18 STATE
SECRETARY OF DEFENSE STEMERDINK SPOKE ENTHUSIASTICALLY
ABOUT HIS VISIT TO WASHINGTON AND OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST
IN THE UNITED STATES LAST WEEK. HE HAD NOTHING BUT
PRAISE FOR THE INTELLIGENT PROGRAMMING AND EFFICIENT
ARRANGEMENTS, AND WAS PARTICULARLY IMPRESSED BY HIS
ESCORT COL. KIENZLE, WHO STEMERDINK WAS PLEASED TO LEARN
WOULD SUCCEED THE EMBASSY'S AIR ATTACHE AT THE END OF HIS
REGULAR TOUR OF DUTY NEXT SUMMER. JUDGING BY HIS
COMMENTS HIS VISIT WAS AN UNQUALIFIED SUCCESS. HE
RETURNED MORE DETERMINED THAN EVER TO REPLACE OBSOLESCE

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MAJOR ITEMS OF MATERIEL OF ALL THREE OF THE NETHERLANDS

ARMED SERVICES WITH AMERICAN EQUIPMENT. HE ALSO RETURNED WITH A GREATER UNDERSTANDING AND APPRECIATION OF THE UNITED STATES AS A PEOPLE AND AS A LEADING FORCE IN THE FREE WORLD. END SUMMARY.

2. STEMERDINK WAS GRATEFUL TO SECRETARY CLEMENTS FOR SERVING AS HIS OFFICIAL HOST, FOR OFFERING HIM A MOST ENJOYABLE LUNCHEON AND PARTICULARLY FOR SPENDING A CONSIDERABLE TIME IN FRANK, DOWN-TO-EARTH CONVERSATION. FOR EXAMPLE, STEMERDINK SAID THAT SECRETARY CLEMENTS HAD PATIENTLY HEARD HIM OUT ON STEMERDINK'S EXPLANATION AS TO WHY THE GON PREFERS NOT TO SET THE NETHERLANDS DEFENSE BUDGET AS A PERCENTAGE OF GNP--A VULNERABLE CONCEPT WITH THE PRESENT WELFARE-ORIENTED DUTCH PARLIAMENT-- BUT RATHER TO SPECIFY MATERIEL AND MANPOWER REQUIREMENTS WHICH WILL BE MET REGARDLESS OF INCREASING COSTS. STEMERDINK ALSO RECALLED WITH PLEASURE THE OPPORTUNITY AFFORDED HIM TO EXPLAIN TO SECRETARY CLEMENTS AND ONE OR TWO OTHER SENIOR U.S. OFFICIALS WHY THE DUTCH LEFT HAD A CONTINUING CONCERN ABOUT EVENTS IN CHILE AND REPORTS OF US INVOLVEMENT PRECEDING THE OVERTHROW OF ALLENDE. STEMERDINK HAD NOT EXPECTED TO CONVERT US OFFICIALS TO THE DUTCH SOCIALIST POINT OF VIEW ON THE CHILE SITUATION BUT HE WAS IMMENSELY PLEASED THAT HE HAD BEEN ABLE TO EXPRESS THAT POINT OF VIEW TO SENIOR OFFICIALS WHO PERHAPS HAD NOT HEARD IT DIRECTLY BEFORE FROM A EUROPEAN SOCIALIST.

3. STEMERDINK FELT THAT HIS DISCUSSIONS IN THE PENTAGON, NOTABLY WITH SECRETARIES MIDDENDORF AND MCLUCAS, HAD BEEN VALUABLE IN ENRICHING HIS KNOWLEDGE OF THE RELATIONSHIP OF SOPHISTICATED MATERIEL TO STRATEGY. HE WAS ALSO SATISFIED WITH THAT PART OF HIS DISCUSSIONS DEALING WITH ONE OF HIS PRIME SUBJECTS, THE NEED FOR SPECIALIZATION AND RATIONALIZATION OF NATO FORCES ON THE CENTRAL FRONT.

4. STEMERDINK REACTED POSITIVELY TO HIS CONVERSATION WITH DEP. ASST. SEC. VINE AND DIRECTOR PREEG COVERING US-EC RELATIONS, WHICH APPARENTLY GAVE STEMERDINK SOME NEW INSIGHT INTO THE SUBJECT. HE WAS SORRY THAT PREOCCUPATION WITH SENATE HEARINGS ON THE CONFIRMATION OF GOVERNOR ROCKEFELLER LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CONTRAVENED HIS PLANNED APPOINTMENTS AT THE WHITE HOUSE AND ON THE HILL. HE HOPED TO REMEDY THIS OMISSION ON HIS NEXT VISIT TO WASHINGTON.

5. STEMERDINK SAID HE WAS FULLY SATISFIED WITH HIS VISITS TO DEFENSE INDUSTRY PLANTS, TO EDWARDS AIR FORCE BASE AND TO FT. HOOD. HE GAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT THESE VISITS HAD CONFIRMED HIS CONFIDENCE IN THE SUPERIORITY OF AMERICAN

MILITARY TECHNOLOGY AT A PRICE THAT THE NETHERLANDS CAN AFFORD.

6. STEMERDINK CONCLUDED BY OBSERVING THAT BEFORE HIS VISIT IT HAD NEVER OCCURRED TO HIM TO THINK ABOUT VACATIONING IN THE UNITED STATES. HOWEVER, HIS ONE WEEK IN OUR COUNTRY, DEPSITE THE PRESSURES OF A BUSY SCHEDULE, HAD CHANGED ALL THAT. ON RETURNING TO HOLLAND HE HAD SHARED HIS ENTHUSIASM WITH HIS WIFE AND TOLD HER THAT THEY SHOULD BEGIN PLANNING A VACATION TRIP TO THE UNITED STATES WITH THEIR YOUNG SON, PERHAPS NEXT SUMMER.

7. COMMENT: JUDGING BY STEMERDINK'S HIGHLY FAVORABLE COMMENTS, WE CONCLUDE THAT HIS VISIT WAS AN UNQUALIFIED SUCCESS. WE EXPECT THAT AS A RESULT HE WILL NOW BE IN A POSITION TO PLAY AN EVEN MORE HELPFUL ROLE WITHIN HIS GOVERNMENT AS REGARDS MILITARY RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO QUESTIONS OF MATERIEL PROCUREMENT. IN A LARGER SENSE HIS VISIT WAS ALSO A BIG PLUS. STEMERDINK, AN INTELLIGENT, PRACTICAL-MINDED DUTCHMAN, WAS FAVORABLY IMPRESSED BY MUCH OF WHAT HE OBSERVED, AND NOT JUST IN THE DEFENSE FIELD. HE SAW FOR HIMSELF THE PHYSICAL AND HUMAN DIMENSIONS OF THE AMERICAN NATION AND GOT A BETTER PERCEPTION OF WHAT THE UNITED STATES STANDS FOR AND CAN DELIVER. AS A RESULT THERE IS REASON TO BELIEVE THAT HIS OWN INTELLECTUAL HORIZONS HAVE BEEN BROADENED AND HIS CONFIDENCE IN THE US NATIONAL PURPOSE STRENGTHENED. THE EMBASSY'S THANKS TO ALL THOSE WHO PLANNED AND WORKED HARD TO ACHIEVE THESE VALUABLE RESULTS.
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